

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus for and a method of detecting a defocus error signal. First, second and third light receiving regions of a photodetector are arranged in a radial direction of a recording medium to independently perform photoelectric conversion with respect to incident light which is reflected/diffracted by the recording medium. A subtractor subtracts a sum signal of detection signals from the first and third light receiving regions and a detection signal of the second light receiving region to output a defocus error signal, to detect defocus and/or a change in thickness of the recording medium. The defocus error signal and a push-pull tracking error signal are compared in a state in which a predetermined amount of defocus is applied to a light spot to detect a seek direction of the recording medium having a land/groove structure.